

DIGGING DEEPER
BOOK CLUB BIBLE STUDY SERIES



SEEN BY GOD,
SENT TO SEE OTHERS

A Bible Study Companion to Theo of Golden



ARTESIAN
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Theo of Golden

By Donna Snow

Main Scripture

“You are a God of seeing.”

Genesis 16:13 (ESV)

Introduction

Theo of Golden gives you a beautiful bridge into Scripture because the story turns on themes that are already deeply biblical: being truly seen, quiet kindness, generosity, hidden grief, listening well, dignity, and the image of God in ordinary people.

The basic premise is that Theo comes to Golden, sees portraits of townspeople in a coffee shop, buys them, and begins giving each portrait to its rightful person. That simple act opens doors into people’s stories, pain, and hope. The book revolves around “seeing and being seen,” kindness, creative generosity, and human connection.

Opening Question: Where in the book did Theo make someone feel truly seen? Where have you experienced that kind of grace in your own life?

Session 1: God Sees the Overlooked

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 16:7–13 — The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness... So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, ‘You are a God of seeing,’ for she said, ‘Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.’

Luke 19:1–10 — And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.’

John 4:4–26 — ‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’

TIE-IN THOUGHT

Theo’s portraits are a picture of recognition. In Scripture, God does not glance at people. He sees them — their history, wounds, sin, longing, and possibility. Being seen by God is not merely exposure for condemnation.

In Christ, it is an invitation into grace. God sees us fully — our sin, our wounds, our need — and He moves toward us in mercy through His Son. The Law reveals what God sees; the Gospel declares what He has done about it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between being looked at and being truly seen?
- Which character in Theo of Golden seemed most overlooked?
- How does Jesus’ way of seeing people challenge the way we move through our own communities?

Session 2: The Image of God in Ordinary People

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:26–27 — Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Psalms 139:13–16 — For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

James 3:9–10 — With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

TIE-IN THOUGHT

The portraits matter because they give dignity back to people. They say, ‘You are worth noticing.’ That lines up beautifully with the biblical truth that every person carries God-given worth before they do anything impressive, useful, or admirable.

The world often values people by usefulness, beauty, success, or reputation. Scripture begins somewhere much deeper: every person is created by God, known by God, and accountable to God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How does the act of giving someone their portrait restore dignity?
- Who in your everyday life might need to be noticed rather than hurried past?
- How would our conversations change if we remembered Genesis 1:27 before we spoke?

Session 3: Hidden Kindness and Quiet Generosity

SCRIPTURES

Matthew 6:1, 3–4 — ‘Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven... But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.’

Hebrews 13:2 — Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Galatians 6:9–10 — And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Proverbs 11:25 — Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

TIE-IN THOUGHT

Theo’s kindness is not flashy. It’s personal, costly, and attentive. That’s where the Bible study can go deeper than “be nice.” Biblical kindness is love taking action for the good of another person.

But the heart of this session is not a call to try harder. It is this: Christ gave quietly and completely for us — on the cross, without fanfare, for people who could not repay Him. It is only because we have been recipients of that kind of grace that we have both the motive and the freedom to give in kind.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What makes Theo’s generosity different from ordinary charity?
- Why do quiet acts of kindness sometimes carry more spiritual weight than public ones?
- What is one specific, non-performative act of kindness God may be placing in front of you?

Session 4: Listening as Love

SCRIPTURES

James 1:19 — Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

Proverbs 18:13 — If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

Romans 12:15 — Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

TIE-IN THOUGHT

Theo's gift for listening and noticing beauty in small details reflects a deeply biblical practice. Listening is one of the ways we love our neighbor without trying to fix, control, or rush them. In a culture of noise and rapid response, slowing down to truly hear someone is itself an act of service.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who listens well in the book? Who struggles to be heard?
- Why is listening hard in our current culture?
- What would change if Christians became known as people who listen before speaking?

Session 5: Beauty, Art, and Redemption

SCRIPTURES

Exodus 31:1-5 — The LORD said to Moses, ‘See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship.’

Ecclesiastes 3:11 — He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also put eternity into man’s heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Philippians 4:8 — Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

TIE-IN THOUGHT

The portraits are not just plot devices. They show how beauty can awaken people. Art can help someone see what they have forgotten about themselves. It can become a doorway to gratitude, repentance, memory, or healing.

When we speak of beauty “pointing us toward redemption,” we mean it carefully — not that art itself redeems, but that it can point us toward the Redeemer. Redemption belongs to Christ alone, accomplished at the cross. But God, in His grace, uses beauty, story, and art as tools that draw our hearts toward Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think the portraits affect people so deeply?
- How has beauty helped you pay attention to God?
- What is the difference between beauty that only makes us feel good and beauty that points us toward God and truth?

A Simple One-Night Version

For a single gathering, use this structure:

- Opening Scripture: Genesis 16:13 — “You are a God of seeing.” (ESV)
- Theme: “The God Who Sees”
- Book tie-in: Theo gives people back their portraits, but God gives people back their dignity.
- Gospel connection: Jesus sees people completely and still moves toward them in mercy.
- Group question: “Who in the book needed to be seen the most, and why?”
- Personal question: “Where do I need to remember that God sees me with both truth and love?”

Action Step: Because Christ noticed you when you were overlooked — and came all the way to the cross to reach you — ask God to show you one person you usually overlook this week. Then do one concrete, quiet thing to bless them.

A Closing Prayer

Lord, give us eyes like Yours. Slow us down enough to notice the people around us. Forgive us for the times we reduce others to labels, roles, mistakes, or first impressions. Thank You for seeing us fully and loving us completely through Christ. Teach us to listen well, give quietly, speak gently, and honor the dignity You have placed in every person. Amen.

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